



SWANSEA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL METROPOLITAN ABERTAWE

Report and Essay Writing

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BUSINESS REPORT TEMPLATE

USE THIS TEMPLATE WHEN ASKED TO PRODUCE A BUSINESS REPORT.

N.B. THIS IS NOT THE SAME AS A RESEARCH PAPER, ACADEMIC ESSAY OR DISSERTATION.

Reports should be submitted in a report cover (no poly-pockets)

All text in italics is for guidance only and should be removed before submission.

Title *(replace this with the report title)*

Name: *(Your name)*

Module: *(Module Title)*

Level: *(e.g. '4' for first year degree/HND/HNC, '5' for second year, '6' for final year, '7' for Master's level)*

Assessment number: *(e.g. '1' if it is the first assessment for this module)*

Assessment title: *The title from your assignment specification.*

Lecturer: *(Your lecturer's name)*

Submission Date: *(The hand-in date)*

Word count: *(You must include an accurate word count)*

N.B alternatively you could insert a cover page using the feature in Word 2007 and adapt it to include all of the above information.

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Executive summary

A short summary of the whole report in a few paragraphs. This should give the reader a basic understanding of the information included in the report, including its conclusions. Imagine that the person reading this has just a few minutes to read the report before an important meeting. This section should give them all the key information they need.

Although this section is placed at the beginning of the report, it is recommended that you write it last.

REMEMBER, ALL WORK SHOULD BE DOUBLE LINED SPACED.

1. Introduction

*Say what you are going to cover in the report, outlining the organisation you are looking at and providing some background information to set the scene. Include an outline of what your analysis will cover and what the report hopes to achieve. You should be rephrasing the question here **in your own words** and setting out the structure you are planning to use in the main findings section. You may be asked to include some background theory and definitions of key terms and concepts in this section. Make sure you reference all sources accurately using the Faculty's referencing style (Harvard/APA). Guidance notes are available on the Moodle site for your programme, or refer to the notes given during the Referencing session of APPD.*

2. Main findings

2.1 What goes in the main findings section?

This is the section in which you address the questions you have been set (and do what you said you were going to do in your introduction).

2.2 How to structure your main findings

Try to structure this section around the elements of the question you have been asked. This makes it easy to link your analysis to the question and enables you to demonstrate that you have achieved the learning outcomes.

2.3 Use subheadings

Break down your answer into sections using subheadings. These can be used to highlight what you are going to cover in the section, and which element(s) of the question you are addressing.

2.4 Numbering sections

Number sections and sub-sections as follows:

1. Section title

1.1. First Subsection

1.2. Second subsection

1.2.1. Further subsections

1.2.1.1. And so on...

2.5. Signposting

At the end of each section include a linking sentence which 'signposts' what is coming next in your report.

3. Conclusions

This is where you demonstrate that you have analysed your findings and used them to reach appropriate and informed conclusions. Do not introduce any new information at this stage.

4. Recommendations

Make focused recommendations for future actions based on the conclusions you have reached. These should be specific and actionable.

5. References

Use the Harvard or APA system. A guide to accurate referencing can be found on the moodle site for your programme, or refer to the handouts provided in the Referencing session of APPD. All references should be listed in alphabetical order and in exactly the same format and font. See the guide for details on how to reference web sites etc. Please avoid referencing sources that are not considered reliable or verifiable – i.e. especially avoid Wikipedia and other non-academic web sites.

6. Appendices

Any supporting information, for example Gantt charts, tables, graphs should be placed in an appendix. Appendices should always be numbered and referenced, both in the appendix and in your reference list. You must refer to all your appendices in the main body of your report.



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Essays

Essays should be submitted in a report cover (no poly-pockets).

Title *(replace this with the essay title)*

Name: *(Your name)*

Module: *(Module Title)*

Level: *(e.g. '4' for first year degree/HND/HNC, '5' for second year, '6' for final year, '7' for Master's level)*

Assessment number: *(e.g. '1' if it is the first assessment for this module)*

Assessment title: *The title from your assignment specification.*

Lecturer: *(Your lecturer's name)*

Submission Date: *(The hand-in date)*

Word count: *(You must include an accurate word count)*

N.B alternatively you could insert a cover page using the feature in Word 2007 and adapt it to include all of the above information.

Structuring an Essay

The only headings that are required for an essay are the title of the essay at the beginning and a Reference list at the end. Below are guidelines for structuring your essay.

- **Title/Question** – Every essay title contains an actual or implied question. The whole of your essay must focus on the title and address that question.

- **Introduction** – In your introduction, explain what the essay is going to do.

- Explain how you interpret the question.
- Identify issues that you are going to explore.
- Give a brief outline of how you will deal with each issue, and in which order.

Length: about one-tenth of the essay.

- **Develop your argument or line of reasoning** – Paragraph 1

- This paragraph covers the first thing your introduction said you would address.
- The first sentence introduces the main idea of the paragraph.
- Other sentences develop the topic of the paragraph. Include relevant examples, details, evidence, quotations, and references.
- Lead up to the next paragraph.

Paragraph 2 and other paragraphs

- The first sentence, or opening sentences, link the paragraph or previous paragraphs, and then introduce the main idea of the paragraph.
- Other sentences develop the paragraph's topic

- **Conclusion** – The conclusion contains no new material.

- Summarise your argument and main themes.
- State your general conclusions.
- Make it clear why those conclusions are important or significant.
- In your last sentence, sum up your argument very briefly, linking it to the title.

Length: about one-tenth of the essay.

- **References and/or Bibliography** – List all the books, articles and other materials you have referred to within the essay. If a bibliography is required, list relevant texts including those you read but did not refer to in the essay.